

Year 7 Geography

Geography inspires students' curiosity about the world, its people, places and environments. In Year 7, students build the foundations of geographical thinking by developing locational and place knowledge, learning how geographers use maps and data, and exploring the interactions between people and the natural environment. The curriculum moves from familiar places and core geographical skills to weather, climate, tropical rainforests, population and India. Students learn to identify patterns, explain geographical processes, use evidence and make connections between places at local, national and global scales.

Our Geography

Learning Objectives

- What is Geography and how do physical and human geography help us understand the world?
- What skills do geographers use, including maps, atlases, scale, direction and geographical data?
- What is "place" in Geography and how can places have different meanings and characteristics?
- Where do we live and what are the human and physical characteristics of Britain, the UK and the British Isles?
- What is population distribution and why is population uneven across the UK?
- Where is London and why is it important?
- How has London's population changed over time?
- How are four-figure and six-figure grid references used to locate features accurately?
- What is the geography of Europe and what are its major countries, cities and physical features?
- How can maps be used to understand the geography of the wider world?

What previous knowledge is required?

Students arrive with varied geographical knowledge from Key Stage 2. Helpful prior knowledge includes the seven continents and five oceans; the countries and capital cities of the UK; basic human and physical features; compass directions; simple map symbols and keys; and experience of using maps, atlases and globes. The topic deliberately revisits these foundations before introducing more precise KS3 geographical vocabulary and skills.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

This topic establishes the locational knowledge and geographical skills used throughout KS3. Map, atlas, scale and grid-reference skills are revisited when students study India later in Year 7, rivers and development in Year 8, and superpowers, globalisation, Africa and hazards in Year 9. Understanding population distribution and London also provides foundations for later work on urbanisation, migration, development and changing places, as well as GCSE geographical skills and place-based questions.

Common Misconceptions

- Geography is only about countries, capital cities and maps; students should understand that it also investigates people, environments, processes and connections.
- Britain, Great Britain, the United Kingdom and the British Isles mean exactly the same thing.
- London is only important because it is the largest city in the UK.
- Place and location mean the same.
- Population is evenly distributed and density and distribution are the same.
- Four-figure and six-figure grid references identify areas in the same way; students need to understand the increasing precision of six-figure references.

National Curriculum / Specification

- Locational knowledge: deepen spatial awareness of the world's countries and their physical and human characteristics.
- Geographical skills: build on knowledge of globes, maps and atlases and apply this routinely.
- Interpret maps, including grid references, scale, topographical and thematic mapping, and aerial/satellite photographs.
- Develop contextual knowledge of globally significant places and communicate geographical information using maps, numerical skills and writing.

Weather, Climate & Extreme Environments

Learning Objectives

- What is the difference between weather and climate?
- How do we measure weather and why is accurate weather data important?
- What is the water cycle and why is it important?
- What are the main types of rainfall and how do they form?
- What are climate graphs and how can they be interpreted?
- How does climate influence where tropical rainforests are found?
- What are tropical rainforests and what are their main characteristics?
- What goods and ecosystem services are provided by tropical rainforests?
- How have plants and animals adapted to tropical rainforest conditions?
- What is deforestation and what are its causes?
- What are the social, economic and environmental impacts of deforestation?
- How can deforestation affect the climate?

What previous knowledge is required?

Students draw on Term 1–2 map skills to locate global climate zones and tropical rainforests. From Key Stage 2, students may know basic weather vocabulary, the water cycle and climate change. This topic revisits these ideas but develops a more process-based understanding, including rainfall formation, climate graphs, ecosystem interdependence and the relationship between human activity and environmental change.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

Understanding weather, climate, the water cycle and ecosystems provides essential foundations for Year 8 Rivers, Development and Year 9 Weather & Climate, water resources and natural hazards. The study of rainforest deforestation introduces students to human–physical interactions, sustainability, resource use and environmental decision-making, which recur in Year 8 Food Resources and Development, and Year 9 Globalisation and climate change. Interpreting climate graphs also develops graphical skills required at GCSE.

Common Misconceptions

- Weather and climate are the same: weather describes short-term day to day atmospheric conditions, while climate describes longer-term patterns of rainfall and temperature.
- The water cycle has a clear beginning and end rather than being a continuous system of stores and flows.
- All tropical rainforests are extremely hot every day and have identical ecosystems.
- Deforestation has one cause and only local impacts; in reality causes and consequences are multiple, interconnected and can operate from local to global scales.

National Curriculum / Specification

- Human and physical geography: weather and climate, hydrology and the use of natural resources.
- Understand how human and physical processes interact to influence and change landscapes, environments and climate.
- Use detailed place-based examples at different scales to understand physical and human processes.
- Interpret geographical information including maps, diagrams and quantitative data, and communicate findings using numerical and written methods.

Population & India

Learning Objectives

- What are population density and population distribution?
- Where do people live around the world and what global patterns can be identified?
- What physical and human factors influence where people live?
- How has global population changed over time?
- What are population pyramids and what can they reveal about population structure?
- What is migration and what are its causes and impacts?
- Where is India and what are its major human and physical characteristics?
- How has India's population changed over time?
- What are the consequences of population growth in India?
- Why is India an emerging country?
- Why is India globally important?
- What challenges might India face in the future?

What previous knowledge is required?

Students use the locational, map and data skills established in Terms 1–2 and apply ideas about human–environment relationships developed in Terms 3–4. Useful Key Stage 2 knowledge includes the location of Asia, basic settlement and land-use ideas, and experience of reading graphs and maps. Students are not expected to have detailed prior knowledge of India; its location, physical geography, population and development are explicitly taught within the topic.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

Population is a core concept that is revisited throughout KS3. This topic prepares students for Year 8 urbanisation and international development, including development indicators and Nigeria as an emerging country, and Year 9 superpowers and Africa are linked to population change. India is revisited in Year 9 as an emerging power, allowing students to build from Year 7 knowledge of its population, economy and global importance. Population pyramids, migration, data interpretation and place-based explanations also provide direct foundations for GCSE human geography.

Common Misconceptions

- Population density and population distribution mean the same.
- High population automatically means high population density; a large country may have a very large population but considerable spatial variation in density.
- Population is not static and is always changing.
- Migration is always international and permanent; migration can be internal or international, temporary or permanent, and driven by a range of push and pull factors.
- India is a poor or rural country; students should recognise major regional inequalities alongside rapid urbanisation, economic growth and increasing global influence.

National Curriculum / Specification

- Locational knowledge: deepen spatial awareness of Asia, including India, its environmental regions, physical and human characteristics, countries and major cities.
- Place knowledge: understand geographical similarities, differences and links through the human and physical geography of a region in Asia.
- Human geography: population, urbanisation, international development, economic activity and natural-resource use.
- Geographical skills: use maps, atlases and geographical data; analyse patterns and communicate information through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and extended writing.